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Public Relations Master's Project

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service: Increasing Online Visibility and Fundraising

A Project in Public Relations

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Executive Summary

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service (NFRRS) is a nonprofit organization based in Buffalo, NY, that provides blind and visually impaired individuals access to local news and current events through broadcast radio. The organization wants to expand its online presence and increase fundraising efforts, as it's run primarily on donations.

The goals of this communication plan will be to increase the awareness of NFRRS's mission among its key publics online, which includes not only the visually impaired listeners but the volunteers and potential donors as well, to strengthen the bond between the radio and its key publics, and to increase donations. To accomplish these goals, I have developed a comprehensive communication plan that includes a content planning strategy to be used across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, as well as an internship program to recruit the younger generation of both visually impaired individuals and potential volunteers/donors. I have also proposed the idea of an annual fundraising event in December during the holiday season that would bring together all of NFRRS's key publics and would simultaneously encourage donations.

This plan would ideally be executed over the course of around six months, starting in June and ending in December 2024. Its success will be evaluated through the use of media tracking on social media platforms, Google Analytics 4 for website tracking, and pre- and post-campaign surveys. Mike Benzin, Executive Director of NFRRS, and the new Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC) along with a potential intern would oversee carrying out this plan.

Phase 1: Formative Research

Step 1: Analysis of Situation

Background

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service is a non-profit organization founded in 1987 to help Western New York and Southern Ontario residents with visual impairments access news and current events through broadcast radio 24/7. Volunteers read a variety of publications for NFRRS listeners, who access the broadcast through a private frequency on WNED 94.5 FM. Local read publications include The Buffalo News, the Batavia Daily News, and the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle. National read publications include USA Today, the Sunday NY Times, and The Wallstreet Journal, among special requests and books. In addition to the radio, NFRRS can be streamed on several audio platforms such as Spotify, Apple iTunes, Amazon Music, Audible, and Google Podcast as well as live from the website.

The non-profit organization runs entirely on donations from fundraising and through partnerships, with WNY Independent Living as the latest partner. WNY Independent Living, like the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service, helps individuals with disabilities. Outside of partnerships, Michael Benzin, Executive Director of NFRRS, has been instrumental in fundraising for the past 35 years. NFRRS had to suspend fundraising events during COVID-19 and the organization would like to hold two events this year; one event pertaining to a cookbook that could be converted to an app and another relating to a literacy event where a blind author could do a read and meet the author. A lot of what NFRRS does promotionally is through social media, word of mouth, and referral partners. NFRRS has a tentative workplan for 2023-2024 which was shared with me, but the issue is that the plan was written to be executed by two

people and there was a vacancy in the community coordinator position that slowed the rate of execution. Mike's predecessor did not have a great deal of media training and with the organization being a small non-profit, he's working towards expanding the marketing and communication efforts with the goals of building the organization's online audience and partnerships, potentially targeting a younger demographic, particularly young adults in their 20s and to increase funding.

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service's Mission (provided by Mike):

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service provides resources and services that deliver audio interpretation, translation and transcription of print & visual media for people who are blind or have a print or visual disability so that they may make informed decisions as full participants in their communities while also enjoying its cultural resources, entertainment and supports.

Significance of the Situation

Expanding the online audience of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service and reaching a younger demographic is important to the organization's mission because the future is online. To best provide services to the visually impaired demographic, NFRRS needs to continue to expand the online efforts and develop strategic partnerships in the process to support potential events in the future. This situation will likely be an ongoing/long term venture for NFRRS, because as with most organizations, in order to grow an online following, there needs to be frequent online posts engaging with the online audience and showing online users that the organization has an active presence digitally.

Those affected by this situation include the listeners of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service as well as those implementing the plan. The trends associated with this situation are that

an increase in online engagement will typically lead to an increase in followers and more exposure leading to organizational growth in the form of donations. This situation is an opportunity for NFRRS to get the word out about the services and ultimately connect with the organization's key publics.

Resolution of the Situation

Gaining visibility, targeting a younger demographic, and increasing support from fundraisers or partners will be instrumental in the longevity of NFRRS. Resolving this situation will benefit not only NFRRS but the listeners for having a community they can be a part of. Mike has told me that the listeners have told NFRRS that they view the volunteer readers as companions who make it seem like the reader is sitting next to them on the couch. This communication plan will work to tackle the areas of improvement for NFRRS so the radio reading service can carry on that feeling for the visually impaired community. The situation holds a top priority for the public relations/communications staff and for the organization's top management because of the benefits that come from a broader audience and improved funding.

Step 2: Analysis of the Organization

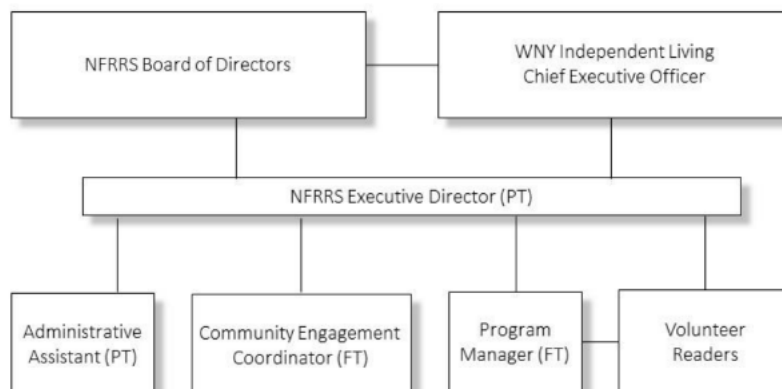
Internal Environment

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service broadcasts a variety of publications to listeners with visual impairments across WNY, Southern Ontario, and Rochester. Regarding the criteria for determining the quality of the service, the listeners have opportunities to provide their feedback and can call into the hotline to enter requests, etc. However, there is not currently a physical metric that the radio service is tracking to measure the quality. That being said, I would say the criteria for determining the quality of service would include the timeliness of the content

delivery, the variety of publications offered, and accessibility. With these factors in mind, I would say NFRRS delivers service at an extremely high level. The radio reading service has been around for over 35 years, offering service 24/7, with coverage of all local news outlets, major national news, as well as special interest publications and books. Within the last three years, NFRRS has gained a major partner, Western New York Independent Living, which is a further testament to the quality of service NFRRS provides. Additionally, there is no other service offered like NFRRS in WNY which makes the organization a staple for the visually impaired community.

With increased support and the ability to expand online and grow a larger following, NFRRS will be able to tap into new markets and provide audio transcription services to even more people in the visually impaired community, directly relating to NFRRS's organizational mission. In terms of communication resources available and the internal structure of NFRRS, the plan will be carried out by Mike, Executive Director, and a newly hired Community Engagement Coordinator. NFRRS, as a nonprofit organization, operates at the top with the NFRRS Board of Directors (consisting of seven members) and the WNY Independent Living CEO, then the NFRRS Executive Director, followed by an Administrative Assistant, Community Engagement Coordinator, Program Manager, and Volunteer Readers. I'll provide a visual of that chart below:

Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service (NFRRS)
Agency Organizational Chart



The budget is minimal for NFRRS, but with the social media tools available today, and with the goal of expanding presence online, the communication plan can still be helpful in achieving the intended objectives. A challenge that NFRRS had faced recently was a vacancy in the Community Engagement Coordinator role, which put a lot of pressure on Mike, Executive Director, to tackle all the marketing/communication efforts single handedly. However, that role has been recently filled, which should help in terms of execution. Within the next three years these resources will likely remain unchanged, but with social media engagement being an ongoing task, Mike and the CEC will likely get into a rhythm and can even invest in software that will automate social posts moving forward. For example, the CEC could draft social posts for a month at a time in a software tool that connects to NFRRS's social media accounts, and they could be scheduled to go out multiple times a week. This would result in the CEC just having to go in once a month instead of multiple times a week in the future.

Public Perception

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service has a strong presence in the visually impaired community. NFRRS has placed approximately 1,000 radios throughout the region and has over 5,000 listeners including those who tune in digitally. According to NFRRS's brochure, the number of people in need of reading radios exceeds the capacity to meet the demand. The radios have been distributed to both nursing homes and private residences.

Regarding reputation, NFRRS has been awarded for delivering exceptional service by receiving the New York State Eleanor Roosevelt Community Service Award in addition to the Buffalo Eye Bank Rudy Spitzer Award for "service above & beyond the call of duty to the sightless and sight impaired."

NFRRS clearly does not need much assistance with its outstanding reputation, but I would like to see this communication plan improve NFRRS's visibility even further to help NFRRS expand and connect with more members of the visually impaired community.

External Environment

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service does not have any competition locally. This is important because right now NFRRS has the ability to target every visually impaired individual in the areas the organization has expanded to thus far. There is not any significant opposition that currently exists. However, when we get to the competitor analysis, there are similar radio reading services throughout the country that we can use to determine what is working for them and what is not. A few examples are the Sun Sounds in Arizona, the Iowa Radio Reading Information Service (IRIS), and MindsEye in Illinois.

There isn't anything happening in the environment that will impact the effectiveness of the public relations program for NFRRS at the moment. If anything, I would say NFRRS is in a great position to carry out a public relations program right now because of the recent hiring of the CEC role, which will be vital for Mike, Executive Director at NFRRS.

Step 3: Identification of Appropriate Publics

Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service's primary publics include:

Customers: The primary customers of NFRRS are members of the visually impaired community typically aged 40-70 throughout WNY. The group of potential customers also includes individuals often in that same age range who have Parkinson's disease and have difficulty holding publications.

Producers: This group encompasses the NFRRS board members, WNY Independent Living, the executive director, the NFRRS support staff, and all the volunteer readers.

Enablers: The enablers for NFRRS would be the group of opinion leaders that support the organization and the visually impaired community. This includes:

- State/local government agencies
- Local colleges/universities
- Local nursing homes/senior living facilities

Intercessory Publics and Opinion Leaders: This group would include local policy makers or influential community leaders who advocate for NFRRS and the visually impaired community.

Limiters: NFRRS does not have any competition in the area, which would typically serve as a limiter. In lieu of competition, the limiters that NFRRS would have could include accessibility issues on digital platforms.

Analyzing Key Publics

1. Visually Impaired Listeners: One of the key publics for this communication plan will be focused on the current visually impaired listeners and how to connect with them better as well as the visually impaired community who would be in the younger age range of 20-30. The listeners of NFRRS rely on the organization for access to news and current events, making them the group that benefits the most from the organization's services. The latter part of this key public would be considered a latent public because they are at the age where they are becoming more independent but may not know of a way to easily access local news and entertainment yet through NFRRS. This is where NFRRS can start organizing communication that is intended to educate the younger generation of visually

impaired individuals on the type of content that may be of interest to them provided by NFRRS.

2. Potential Funders: Another key public this communication plan will target pertains to potential donors and funders. In order for NFRRS to continue offering its services, the organization needs the financial backing and support necessary to do so. In addition to government grants, potential donors could include local charities that support visual impairment related initiatives, individual donors, as well as corporate sponsorships. Charities or corporations that assist the visually impaired community may already know of NFRRS, but might not be organized for action, making them an aware public. In this situation, we will be determining a strategy to engage with this public more intentionally, explaining the significance of NFRRS's mission.

Literature Review

1. [Challenging Consumers to Do Good by Grabbing a Boost of Blue with Padilla](#)

Summary: When the prices of food increased in 2022, food scarcity increased as well throughout households in the U.S. To keep blueberries accessible and to help combat child hunger, The U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) launched a social media campaign called “Grab a Boost, Give a Boost” during National Blueberry Month. The campaign included a meaningful challenge where the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council said it would donate \$1 to No Kid Hungry for every post that used the tag @blueberries. For the challenge, USHBC would donate up to \$50k. To spread the word about this campaign, USHBC leveraged influencer marketing which included partnering with health, wellness and food influencers. The campaign also included paid advertising on social media and a Times Square banner. The campaign was a success, reaching

its goal of raising \$50,000 through over 54 million impressions, 5 in-person interviews, and coverage from leading publications. There was a 5.38x return on dollars invested.

Relevancy: This case study is relevant to the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading service because of its emotional appeal nature. USHBC carried out a successful cause-based campaign that resonated with its key publics, which in this case included blueberry consumers, primarily parents. Because of its meaningful work and its unique service offerings, NFRRS could benefit from using a similar emotional appeal campaign strategy to attract potential donors.

2. [Bank of America: That Made All the Difference Podcast](#)

Summary: Bank of America developed a podcast in 2019 titled, “That Made All the Difference” (TMATD) which asked its guests “What would you like the power to do?” The goal of the podcast and the campaign was to encourage its current and potential customers to think about their personal goals and how they could enact positive change in their lives. Its target audience included individuals ages 25-64 with investible assets higher than \$50,000. In the second season of the podcast, BofA partnered with the New York Times and focused on specific stories relating to COVID-19 and racial inequities. The podcast touched on personal subjects and conveyed BofA’s commitment to supporting local communities. It was streamed on all major podcast platforms including Spotify, Apple, and Google Play, ads were created to promote each episode, and the New York Times network shared the series as well. BofA also made sure its website was accessible for those with sensory or physical deficiencies on mobile devices. The campaign was a massive success, receiving over 59,000 listens which totaled over six million minutes. Additionally, the campaign improved BofA’s brand reputation, increasing its positive opinions by 15 percent.

Relevancy: This case study is an example of how important it is for brands to connect with their audience and find out what resonates with them. The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service has a very niche audience and connecting with them through two-way communication and catering to their interests will be a great way to build a relationship.

3. [Chase Oaks Church: Debuting the New Era of Local Good Center \(Most Effective Campaign on a \\$5,000 to \\$10,000 Budget\)](#)

Summary: Chase Oaks Church wanted to promote its new facility, Local Good Center (LGC) which provides job readiness and education programming services in the North Texas area. To help bring awareness of the new location, Chase Oaks Church hired Three Box Strategic Communications. The budget was minimal, between \$5-\$10k, and the objectives included directing 500 new Texas users to the LGC website, increasing Instagram and Facebook followers by 25 percent, securing four media hits, and hosting approximately 200 external stakeholders at the open house. To accomplish this, Three Box developed strategies that included engaging local stakeholders, utilizing digital channels that the organization already had a presence on, and creating eye-catching marketing assets. The tactics of the campaign included developing educational brochures and grand opening invitations, increasing social media efforts, creating a digital media kit, and hosting a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The campaign was a success with approximately 300 attendees at the grand opening, LGC's website received 382 page views and 148 new users on the grand opening, there was a 40 percent increase in Facebook followers and Instagram followers increased by 35 percent. Three Box was able to achieve these results and more while coming in under budget.

Relevancy: This case study demonstrated the ability to achieve results on a minimal budget, which is important for non-profit organizations like the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service

to consider when planning campaigns. LGC did a tremendous job in the planning and strategy development area, and it created measurable objectives that were straightforward and achievable within the allocated budget, which is another important consideration when formulating communication plans.

4. [No Kid Hungry: Using Restaurant Incentives to Support Dine for No Kid Hungry](#)

Summary: Share Our Strength is a nonprofit organization that created a location-based campaign to use during its “Dine for No Kid Hungry” initiative in an effort to create awareness and increase donations through restaurant partnerships. The objective was to drive measurable visits to the participating restaurants. The target audience included smartphone users whose location was in the vicinity of the participating restaurants. Using location targeting, audience targeting, and neighborhood targeting, No Kid Hungry was able to first pinpoint which restaurants would be best to partner with for the campaign, then present ads to people in the vicinity of those restaurants and offer promotional deals to those who visited a participant restaurant recently. The campaign raised \$511,407 from 26,857 visits to participating restaurants, a .31 percent click-through rate, and a .86 percent visitation rate.

Relevancy: NFRRS could benefit from using a similar campaign to raise money through partnering with local restaurants and attempting a strategy that focuses on location based advertising. NFRRS is located near the Walden Galleria mall, so the participating restaurants could even be some of the restaurants located in or around the mall and the ad campaign could be centered around that area.

5. [American Immigration Council: Promoting Acceptance with a Digital PSA](#)

Summary: The American Immigration Council and the Ad Council created a national campaign titled, “Belonging Begins with Us” to encourage acceptance of immigrants to the U.S. The campaign used visuals that helped the audience feel solidarity in feelings of loneliness and sought to spark empathy among all individuals who live in America. A cover of the song “Walk a Mile in My Shoes” was played over the visuals and the video directed the viewers to a campaign website where dozens of stories of belonging were shared. The campaign was run using video and display ads on TVs, desktops, and mobile devices. The campaign was a success, reaching 4.7 million consumers and delivering a \$.39 CPA for a landing page visit, exceeding industry benchmarks by 1550 percent as well as having a video-completion rate of 98.57 percent.

Relevancy: This case study demonstrates the impact of an emotional, story-telling campaign through empathy. This can be useful for NFRRS when developing messaging strategies and tactics for future communication plans. It’s another great example of inclusivity, which is something the listeners of NFRRS can understand the importance of and the sentiment can be shared by potential donors as well.

6. [Centre for Ocular Research & Education \(CORE\) – Alerting the World to MADE: Mask-Associated Dry Eye \(Most Effective Campaign On A Shoestring Budget \(\\$5,000 or Less\)](#)

Summary: The Centre for Ocular Research & Education (CORE) is a top ophthalmic research organization. One of the communication team members heard an ophthalmologist in 2020 say that there was mention of increased dry eyes from wearing masks. The ophthalmologist referred to this as Mask-Associated Dry Eye (MADE). Thus, CORE launched a communication initiative

that studied this further and helped make the general population as well as eye care professionals aware of the situation as they gathered their research globally. The tactics used included social media creation, outreach to sponsors, and DIY infographics. The budget was minimal, less than \$5,000, and although the team had little resources to work with, the campaign took off and successfully helped global eye care professionals have a better understanding of MADE, developed awareness among the general population, and generated interest from potential industry sponsors in the process.

Relevancy: Like in the Chase Oaks Church case, this is another example of how public relations communication plans can be incredibly effective on a minimal budget with limited resources, especially when using social media and creating images/infographics using free tools in-house. The campaign was also structured around a specific topic where content was generated in a variety of forms to be consumed by both eye care professionals and the general public which is something that the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service can consider as well with unique, popular topics discussed in a series of audio segments.

7. [Clear Men Swipes All: Hijacking League of Legends](#)

Summary: Clear Men, a shampoo brand, wanted to find a way to connect with the younger generation of Vietnamese men and sought to accomplish this through e-sports, which was found to be a popular interest among that target demographic. The brand wanted to promote feelings of confidence and success in the gaming community through Clear Men products. To reach the target audience, Clear Men became a partner of an e-sports tournament, the 2019 Vietnam Championship Series Summer Season. Clear Men found that League of Legends was a particularly popular game amongst the younger generation of Vietnamese men and managed to incorporate itself into the game throughout the tournament. The campaign also featured a

microsite “prediction contest” for viewers of the event to cast a vote for their favorite team, create user-generated taglines, and a weekly prize for the “Unbeatable Man of the Week” which was used to encourage the winning player to keep up the good work. Some highlights of the campaign included a 1312 percent ROI, 19 million views on Clear Men micro-site for the prediction contest, 19.6 million clicks on display banners via Garena website, and 4.5 million views on 160 PR articles. Additionally, 95 percent of the audience loved the brand and 100 percent of gamers remembered Clear Men’s message.

Relevancy: The case study is a great example for NFRRS to leverage partnerships with an organization that already has a relationship with a target audience that NFRRS is looking to connect with. This could be for younger generations that NFRRS is looking to attract, or even for a certain demographic of donors that the organization feels may be interested in providing support.

8. [How Oral B’s Hyper-Targeted the Launch of Its iO Electric Toothbrush](#)

Summary: In March 2021, Oral-B used Facebook and Instagram mobile ads to promote its new electric toothbrush to a targeted audience in Australia and New Zealand. The success of the hyper-targeted campaign was evaluated using CTR, conversions, as well as PR and influencer coverage. The audiences were broken up into three types of consumers: early tech adopters, luxury health/beauty shoppers, and oral-care conscious consumers ages 18 and older. These categories were turned into audiences using interest and contextual-based targeting from retailer data signals. The campaign used a “catch, connect, and close” strategy aiming to first catch the attention of the audience, then to connect with the audience through product education, and the close portion included ad retargeting to those who engaged with the ads during the prior phases. This strategy was tested on a different product a few months prior to the execution of this phase

to ensure audience matching and the effectiveness of the strategy. With the campaign being a self-led experience, being guided through each phase using strategic retargeting, it gave consumers a chance to process the information and better understand the product.

Relevancy: This campaign is a great example of using a multi-layered approach in mobile advertising to reach and connect with an intended audience. This can be useful for NFRRS to consider when developing ad campaigns in a way that is staggered and only shows more information to those who initially seemed interested, so the exposure reaches the targeted audience and will increase the likelihood of making a conversion, whatever that may be for NFRRS's specific promotional needs.

9. [Oreo Vietnam: How Oreo Stays Playful](#)

Summary: Oreo created a “Stay Playful” campaign in 2019/2020 to promote the emotional connection between parents and their children during the pandemic lockdowns. For the campaign, Oreo determined four micro-passions that would speak to both parents and kids with the target audience being millennial parents ages 25-44 with kids 10 and under. The micro-passions included food, dance, music, and entertainment, and Oreo created messaging specific to each of them. The campaign was run on Facebook and YouTube, with the majority of the budget on mobile devices. The results of the campaign were fantastic, gaining over 80 million impressions, reaching almost 20 million consumers in Vietnam, earning a brand power score of 9/10, and increasing Oreo sales in Vietnam by 27 percent.

Relevancy: Conducting research and figuring out what your intended audience is interested in and creating content that ties in those interests is a great way to encourage engagement and build trust with key publics. This can be helpful for NFRRS when creating content plans on social

media sites or to promote an upcoming event. Understanding the interests of your target audience is important to improve engagement, whether the content is to be used in advertisements or in organic content on social media sites and blogs. NFRRS can collect this data and build a two-way communication strategy through conducting polls on social media or by asking followers to answer questions in social media posts in the comment sections and interacting with them.

10. [How Gillette Appealed to Gen Z](#)

Summary: Gillette is a men's grooming brand that sought interest in connecting and appealing to the younger generation, specifically gen Z males (ages 18-30) in China. Men ages 18-22 in China are active on a video game called Honor of King and using this information, Gillette developed a campaign that played on this theme using the messaging, “#Equipment for your ski, carry you to be king#.” The campaign created a short film that incorporated heroic elements of the game with the shaving technique and Gillette's products. Gillette allocated 90 percent of the advertising budget on mobile, specifically creating interactive ads on Weibo, TikTok, and Douyu social platforms. The results of the campaign were phenomenal, reaching over 200 million players, 50 million views on Douyu, improving its brand awareness by 8.6 percent, and increasing the youth's preference for the Gillette brand by 50 percent. Additionally, the campaign attracted a 70 percent increase in new customers with the majority falling into the gen Z category. The jump in gen Z new customers was a 66 percent increase. The campaign also exceeded its sales performance predictions by 276 percent and the collaborations the brand made throughout the campaign boosted over 10 million sales.

Relevancy: This campaign demonstrates the ability to effectively connect with a younger generation like gen Z, through collecting information that helps it better understand that audience. NFRRS can conduct similar research when trying to connect with the visually

impaired community of gen Z. Conducting this research will help NFRRS determine where its target audience is, whether it be a certain social platform, or a video game, or an accessible app and it will also help in determining what the target audience is interested in which will can be incorporated in the content. Finding out where to advertise or post content as well as what to post is essential to connecting with NFRRS's target audience.

Primary Research

Content Analysis

I analyzed Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service's website and social media accounts for content, clarity of mission, and engagement. I also analyzed two similar organizations that were mentioned earlier for the same information, Sun Sounds in Arizona, and the Iowa Radio Reading Information Service (IRIS). This audit and competitor analysis helped me identify strengths and weaknesses for NFRRS digitally.

Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Services

Website: <https://nfradioreading.org/>

Clarity of Mission: NFRRS explicitly states who its services are for and where the services are offered on the Home page.

Appearance/Functionality: The website has a call-to-action button on the Home page, directing users to "Listen Live" in the first section of the website as well as in the header which is great. There are also several call-to-action buttons throughout the Home page, directing users to where they may need to find more information. Additionally, there are links to the NFRRS social pages

at the bottom of the Home page, but the Facebook page link does not seem to be viewable unless you already belong to the page.

Content: The copy is clear, straightforward and the pages are informative. There is a page to recruit volunteers, a program selection page that provides links to a variety of publications, an on-air schedule page for users to find which publications will be broadcasted at certain times, a page for visitors to donate, as well as a page outlining upcoming activities and events.

Summary: Overall, the site is quite easy to navigate and it's informative. One suggestion would be to make the Facebook link publicly accessible for site visitors to connect with NFRRS. Also, where there are instances of "contact us" on the pages I would hyperlink that text to either a phone number or to an email address to make it easy for someone to connect without having to hunt for that information. There is an instance of this on the Home page that says, "Contact us if your organization is interested in learning more about sponsorship and underwriting opportunities." Just linking the "contact us" portion would be sufficient.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nfrrs>

Page Likes/Followers: 374 (The page is setup where you can Follow but there is not a Like option)

Post Frequency: ~4-8 times per month.

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/nfradioreading/>

Followers: 77

Total Posts: 59

Post Frequency: Infrequently

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/@niagarafrontierradioreadin2798>

Subscribers: 2

Number of Videos: 4

Post Frequency: Last video posted 3 years ago.

LinkedIn: <https://www.instagram.com/nfradioreading/>

Connections: 43

Post Frequency: Infrequently

X (Twitter): <https://twitter.com/NFRadioReading>

Followers: 103

Post Frequency: Infrequently

Summary: This analysis of Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Services' website and social media accounts has shown there is room for improvement in terms of post frequency on most platforms. Facebook, Instagram and X could be used to engage more with the listeners and the LinkedIn account could be expanded to make more connections to local businesses and individuals who could be potential donors/funders or some form of partnership. The website is serving its purpose and does not need many changes.

Competitor Content Analysis #1 – Sun Sounds in Arizona

Website: <https://sunsounds.org/>

Clarity of Mission: Sun Sounds of Arizona's mission, vision, and core values are clearly stated under the About Sun Sounds section of the website.

Appearance/Functionality: The Sun Sounds of Arizona’s website has a nice “Text Resize” option in the top right corner, which was a nice touch considering its audience. The colors and the text complement each other making it easy to read.

Content: Like Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service’s website, Sun Sounds of Arizona’s has all of the necessary information for its listeners, volunteers, and potential donors. Sun Sounds of AZ also linked its social media accounts at the bottom of the website. I found it easier to contact NFRRS from the website than the Sun Sounds website because the Contact button is only added in the footer of the site, not making it visible immediately to site visitors.

Summary: Overall, I felt the NFRRS and Sun Sounds of Arizona websites to be quite similar. There wasn’t anything that the Sun Sounds of Arizona had on its website that NFRRS did not. One area of difference was the button description that website visitors could click into to tune in live. NFRRS has the button labeled, “Listen Live” and the Sun Sounds of AZ has the link text display what is currently being broadcasted. I’ll provide an example below:



That could be something NFRRS updates in the header section as well, while keeping the “Listen Live” button in the first section of the Home page for a variety in call-to-action buttons.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/sunsounds>

Page Likes: 760

Page Followers: 773

Post Frequency: Almost daily.

Instagram: Does not have an Instagram.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SunSoundsofAZ>

Subscribers: 27

Number of Videos: 9

Post Frequency: Last video posted 8 years ago.

X (Twitter): <https://twitter.com/sunsoundsofaz>

Followers: 581

Post Frequency: Almost daily.

LinkedIn: Does not have a LinkedIn.

Summary: The Sun Sounds of Arizona has a regular presence on most of its social media accounts. It is not a coincidence that it has acquired the following it has on those social platforms with the rate of engagement and activity the organization has built. Consistency is key when it comes to building a social network. This is something I will work into the strategy and tactics for NFRRS.

Competitor Content Analysis #2 – Iowa Radio Reading Information Service (IRIS)

Website: <https://iowaradioreading.org/>

Clarity of Mission: The Iowa Radio Reading Information Service's website clearly states its mission and how it works on the Home page.

Appearance/Functionality: The IRIS website is easy to read, but the call-to-action buttons that include “Stream IRIS now” and “Apply for an IRIS radio” aren’t seen until you scroll to the bottom of the Home page. From an aesthetic standpoint, the imagery is lacking, and the website is very plain. There also aren’t any links to IRIS’ social media platforms anywhere on the website.

Content: The content on the IRIS website is straightforward and detailed. It has pages built out for listeners, volunteers, and potential donors. There is also an interactive event calendar that allows visitors to copy broadcasts to their calendars as a reminder to tune in. This feature is a nice way to connect with listeners.

Summary: The Iowa Radio Reading Information Service’s website has a good foundation, but the site is not as interactive or engaging as it could be and not providing ways for its visitors to connect with IRIS on any of its social accounts is not an effective way to grow its following.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064404234954>

Page Likes/Followers: 430 (The page is setup where you can Follow but there is not a Like option)

Post Frequency: 2-4 times per month.

Instagram: IRIS does not have an Instagram.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@irisiris2991>

Subscribers: 6

Number of Videos: 10

Post Frequency: 4 times in the last year.

X (Twitter): <https://twitter.com/irisreadstoiowa?lang=en>

Followers: 113

Post Frequency: Last tweet posted in 2022.

LinkedIn: IRIS does not have a LinkedIn.

Summary: IRIS has the least presence on social media accounts when compared to NFRRS and the Sun Sounds of Arizona. Most likely, IRIS does not have a dedicated social media manager who knows what to post or where to start. This is common among nonprofit organizations as they are mostly volunteer-based, and since social media management is often time consuming, those roles can take a backseat so the volunteers can focus on providing the service offered by the organization.

In-depth Interviews

Mike Benzin, Executive Director of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service

Summary:

To gain a better understanding of the needs of NFRRS, what has worked in the past and what could use improvement, I had a great discussion with Mike Benzin. Mike has been with the organization for 35 years and he helped me narrow down NFRRS's key audiences, from the demographics of listeners to the huge role played by the volunteers, and how donors play a pivotal role in supporting NFRRS's services as well.

Mike shared with me the need for ideas in content management, as to what to post, how often to post, and how the organization can do more to build an online audience which was important for me to consider when brainstorming the strategy and tactics necessary for this communication

plan. Mike also provided several resources for me to utilize in my research including brochures, links to the website and all social media accounts, as well as a document containing the radio's program schedule.

Our full interview report can be found in Appendix A

Linda Rinella, a 15-year volunteer of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service

Summary:

Based on my interview with Mike and his emphasis on the importance of NFRRS's volunteers, I felt it would be a good idea to interview one of the volunteers to learn more about how they work, what they enjoy about their role as a volunteer, and what suggestions they have for NFRRS's initiatives or service offerings. When I reached out to Mike about this idea, he provided me with several volunteers, and I started at the top of the list with Linda Rinella.

Linda reads The Buffalo News on Wednesday mornings live for NFRRS and has been volunteering with the organization for over 15 years. Linda does not have a connection with anyone in the visually impaired community at this point in time, but she got involved initially when the priest at her church had mentioned how one of his friends who could no longer see or read began using this radio reading service and she thought it would be a great volunteer opportunity. Linda provided several excellent suggestions for how the radio reading service can expand its reach to different audiences in the future through offering foreign language recordings. She also mentioned recording from home during the pandemic and how that might be a good way to connect with younger volunteers who may be in college and can't get to the studio during the day.

Our full interview report can be found in Appendix B

Survey

To better understand what motivates individuals to donate to nonprofit organizations, I created a survey using Google Forms that was shared with over one hundred of my coworkers and friends in WNY and beyond online. The survey results helped me to determine what kind of fundraising the general public participates in and how often the survey participants tend to donate to nonprofit organizations. Some notable data collected from the survey report showed that the top three factors impacting the respondent's decision to donate to nonprofit organizations included the impact of the organization's services (73.8 percent), having personal ties to the cause (68.9 percent), and trust in the organization (57.3 percent). This was important because it shows that there is still a chance to connect with individuals who don't have personal ties to the cause by demonstrating the impact of NFRRS's services and by proving it's a trustworthy organization. Another notable outcome from the survey included discovering the way the respondents preferred to donate to nonprofit organizations with the majority selecting in-person fundraising events (38.8 percent). 36.9 percent of respondents said they like giving through annual campaign donations, 16.5 percent said they prefer monthly recurring donations, and 7.8 percent selected workplace gift matching programs. This data was instrumental in how I selected the fundraising tactic for this communication plan.

The full survey results can be found in Appendix C

Focus Group

To gain a better understanding of how to use social media for a nonprofit organization, I conducted a focus group with seven social media strategists. The group originally included eight members, but one had to cancel at the last minute. Everyone in the group had contributed to a

nonprofit organization in the past through social media and what encouraged them to donate was either a personal connection or knowing what the donations were going toward. When asked how a nonprofit organization like NFRRS could communicate its mission effectively through social media, the group had agreed that some sort of testimonials provided by the listeners that explained why the service has bettered their lives or testimonials from someone working for the organization discussing the impact the service has on their life and how it feels to help people would be effective.

The group went on to suggest that the organization posts at least 2-3 times per week and encouraged NFRRS to interact with comments made on the posts. The group also suggested posting polls or questions that would elicit a response from the followers would be a great way to interact with its audience online. We discussed which social platforms would be best to connect with NFRRS's audience as well as fundraising ideas beyond social media.

The full focus group report can be found in Appendix D

Phase 2: Strategy

Step 4:

Positioning Statement

For blind and visually impaired individuals in WNY, Rochester, and Southern Ontario who are seeking access to local information and entertainment, The Niagara Radio Reading Service is the premier resource.

Goals

Reputation Management Goal:

- Increase awareness and understanding of NFRRS's mission among its key publics which in this case include current listeners, visually impaired young adults, and potential donors or investors.

Relationship Management Goal:

- Enhance the bond between the radio reading service and its key publics.

Task Management Goal:

- Grow social media following from key publics.
- Increase donations.
- Recruit two visually impaired young adults to serve as brand ambassadors.

Objectives

Awareness: To raise awareness of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service and its mission to the visually impaired community ages 40-70 (20 percent increase in awareness by December 2024).

Awareness: To raise awareness about NFRRS for visually impaired young adults, specifically to increase their understanding of its services (40 percent increase in awareness among young visually impaired adults ages 18-30 by December 2024).

Awareness: To raise awareness about NFRRS for potential donors, specifically to gain their interest in helping the visually impaired community through meaningful content (40 percent increase in awareness by potential donors by December 2024).

Acceptance: To have an effect on the acceptance of current listeners connecting with NFRRS, specifically to gain interest of current listeners in connecting on social media platforms and sharing the content to their friends in the community (50 percent increase in website traffic and social media engagement by December 2024).

Acceptance: To have an effect on the acceptance of visually impaired young adults making informed decisions and knowing what's going on in the community, specifically to gain their interest in streaming NFRRS (20 percent increase in streaming of NFRRS across podcast platforms).

Acceptance: To have an effect on the acceptance of the visually impaired community, specifically to increase donations and sponsorships (20 percent increase in Support page views by December 2024).

Action: To have an effect on the action of current listeners, specifically to increase social media following of users ages 40-70 by 20% December 2024.

Action: To have an effect on the action of visually impaired young adults, specifically to increase following of users ages 18-30 by 20% December 2024.

Action: To have an effect on the action of potential donors and sponsors, specifically to increase funding 20 percent by December 2024.

Step 5:

Proactive Strategies

Action

- Alliances, Coalitions, and Partnerships - Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service will identify and conduct outreach efforts to organizations within the blind and visually impaired community to collaborate with.
- Audience Engagement/Special Events - Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service will create fundraising events and campaigns (e.g., a live music event, a braille book fair, an accessible craft fair, etc.).
- Organization Performance - NFRRS will develop and implement a content calendar and post 3-5 times per week on Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter) and LinkedIn.
- Alliances, Coalitions, and Partnerships - NFRRS will continue to apply for grants and seek out new ways to improve funding.

Communication

- Create news releases and reach out to local media outlets to promote upcoming events that target the visually impaired community.
- NFRRS will share these updates promotionally on all of its social media platforms to ensure transparency with its key publics and improve engagement.
- NFRRS will share posts highlighting the volunteer readers to establish a deeper connection with its key publics.
- NFRRS will share posts highlighting its younger brand ambassadors to encourage younger adults to stream the service or inquire about a radio.
- NFRRS will share engaging, accessible content that encourages two-way communication with its listeners and donors.
- NFRRS will collect and share testimonials from listeners within the blind and visually impaired community on social media accounts.

Reactive Strategies

This communication plan should not elicit any negative publicity for the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service, but if a crisis occurs at any point throughout its execution, I recommend the following strategies.

Vocal Commiseration

Vocal commiseration is a reactive strategy used by public relations professionals and organizations as a way to express empathy towards its publics suffering from the event or situation. Vocal commiseration can be shared through concern, condolence, regret, or apology.

- Expressing *concern* for a problem is not a permanent solution but is a way for an organization to show it hears and understands that there is a problem, and it plans to launch an investigation for further investigation. This is a good way for an organization to acknowledge a problem without having to admit guilt.
- The *condolence* aspect of a vocal commiseration strategy is used to express grief over someone's loss and is another good way for an organization to voice commiseration without admitting guilt.
- *Regret* is a way for an organization to vocalize that it wishes the event/situation did not happen again without implying fault.
- *Apology* is to be used when asking for forgiveness and fully accepting responsibility for the situation that occurred.

Rectifying Behavior

Another way NFRRS can respond to criticism is through rectifying behavioral strategies that include investigation, corrective action, restitution, and repentance.

- *Investigation* typically follows the vocal commiseration strategy of concern and should only be used in situations when there is enough uncertainty in the facts to justify delaying more strategic actions.
- *Corrective action* is used to fix a problem and prevent its recurrence.
- *Restitution* is a rectifying behavior that helps an organization make amends through compensation.
- *Repentance* is the strongest type of rectifying behavior and should be used when an organization has both a change of heart and a change in action. This strategy is often combined with some of the other rectifying behaviors.

As stated, NFRRS should not experience any negativity with this plan, but these reactive strategies have been proven to be effective pertaining to crisis communication and will be useful if the situation presents itself.

Step 6: Developing the Message Strategy

Message Source

- *Mike Benzin, Executive Director of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service:* Mike has been a part of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service for the past 35 years. He is an expert on all aspects relating to NFRRS from how it's run behind the scenes to working with key publics on the networking side. He has the experience, knowledge, and wisdom necessary to communicate both the mission and vision of NFRRS effectively to the organization's audiences and publics. Also, with his status as the executive director, Mike is perceived as a credible source by his audience.

- *Community Engagement Coordinator*: Mike recently hired a Community Engagement Coordinator who will be working closely with Mike at the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service. The CEC will play a significant role in creating awareness of NFRRS and connecting with the organization's key stakeholders. Like Mike, the CEC will be able to effectively communicate the organization's mission, vision, and values, which is an important part of this plan. As a Community Engagement Coordinator, this person's status will also be perceived as a credible source.
- *Volunteers at the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service*: The NFRRS volunteer readers are what drives the radio service. Without the volunteer readers, there would be no broadcast. Hearing from them and developing their relationship with the audience will be another great voice added to the execution of this plan. They are a familiar source for the audience who have great charisma and can speak confidently to the mission and vision of the organization.

Message Appeal

The key message communicated through this plan will be to advocate for NFRRS, positioning it as an organization that empowers the blind and visually impaired community, to expand its reach within that community and gain support from potential donors. To accomplish this, the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service will use both a rational and an emotional appeal in its message. For the rational appeal, NFRRS will use a factual proposition that includes data showing the number of radios provided to those in the blind/visually impaired community and should share general information about the organization's services to educate and engage its key publics. Testimonials from listeners and endorsements from WNY Independent Living can be used to back this proposition.

The testimonials will also create a connection between the organization and its listeners and potential donors, tying in an emotional appeal.

Verbal Communication

The message structure of this communication plan for NFRRS will present one point of view, also known as a one-sided argument. There isn't a strong "other" side of an argument around supporting a nonprofit organization like the services offered by NFRRS so a single point of view in the messaging will be effective for what we're trying to accomplish. The main idea we'd like to reiterate in the messaging will pertain to supporting the organization. The plan will include powerful language that highlights how NFRRS *empowers* the visually impaired community, fostering *inclusivity* and *accessibility*. Using this language will resonate with each of our key publics in this situation and accurately describe the mission and vision of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service. The messaging campaign can include slogans like, "Help NFRRS Empower the Visually Impaired Community Through Access and Information" or "NFRRS Provides Empowerment through Audio for the Visually Impaired Community." This campaign will avoid using pretentious or exaggerated language, to ensure NFRRS is building trust and credibility with its key publics.

Nonverbal Communication

The Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service already has a logo that can be incorporated into any of the media messaging tactics used throughout this plan. With some of the key publics being the visually impaired community, it's important that image alt tags are incorporated in any imagery used on social platforms so those individuals will be able to understand what is depicted in the posts. This is something that Mike from NFRRS said the organization is already mindful of when

posting content on social media platforms, but I wanted to reiterate it for the sake of the new content that will be added.

Phase 3: Tactics

Step 7:

Interpersonal Communication Tactics

Organizational Involvement

Internship Program

Many college degree programs require students to complete an internship where they will be able to gain real world experience and help them understand the ins and outs of organizations.

NFRRS offering an internship opportunity would be a great way to connect with the younger generation of both visually impaired young adults and young adults who aren't visually impaired and build lasting relationships within the community. This is a great networking opportunity for NFRRS as well and it could lead to potential partnerships and individual donations in the future.

This would be particularly helpful for communications and business students who would be interested in learning how to carry out a communication plan such as this and to help run social media platforms.

Strategic Implications

This tactic will help NFRRS interact with the younger generation of potential volunteers as well as with the younger visually impaired generation, making a profound impact on them as they experience the great work that goes into the production of NFRRS's services. This tactic will advance NFRRS in its awareness, action, acceptance and action objectives in reaching and

connecting with the visually impaired young adult community as well as increasing its awareness for potential donors. Additionally, this internship program could be used as a way to recruit visually impaired young adults to serve as brand ambassadors to further spread the word about NFRRS's services to the younger community.

Implementation Items

Not all internship programs are paid, but paid internship programs are more likely to gain interest. I would suggest this program be used as a summer internship for two months, providing the interns with minimum wage at 10 hours a week. This cost is practical because it's temporary, only two months out of the year, and the exposure gained could pay for itself with new potential donors, but if that isn't feasible, a free internship is fine. NFRRS would reach out to local colleges expressing its internship opportunities for local students to get the word out and could advertise the idea on its social media platforms and on its website for free. There would be no extra equipment needed to purchase for this tactic either, so the only cost associated would be the additional payroll expense if NFRRS chooses to go that route.

Information Exchange

Educational Gathering

To better connect with visually impaired young people, NFRRS should visit college campuses as a guest speaker or at a college fair where representatives can share the organization's service offerings and pass out the brochure that Mike shared with me. This could also be a way to connect with students who are not visually impaired as a potential volunteer opportunity and a way to spread the word about NFRRS's services to their friends or family members who may be visually impaired and are not aware of the organization.

Strategic Implications

This tactic will help NFRRS interact with both visually impaired young adults and potential donors through a two-way communication style where NFRRS can present educational information about its services and answer any questions the audience may have. This further advances the organization towards its awareness and acceptance objectives by providing the education and exposure necessary to spread the word about its services. It's also a place where NFRRS can encourage the key publics to follow the organization on its various social media platforms which further advances the action objectives.

Implementation Items

The cost associated with this tactic will also be very low. The only expense would be the printing of various brochures to pass out at the educational gathering, but the presentation or speech can be created internally for free and most likely only taking an hour or two by either Mike or by the CEC, making this tactic very practical, based on NFRRS's resources. There wouldn't be any equipment needed to be bought for this tactic either.

Annual Holiday Event

This plan will include NFRRS hosting an annual holiday fundraising event where all key publics, current listeners, the younger visually impaired community, volunteers, and potential donors can get together for a day of fun. NFRRS could host the event at a local venue like Rec Room or a hotel like the Hyatt Regency Buffalo. The event can include live music by local bands or poetry readings by visually impaired authors as well as a dinner. In addition to the ticket prices being sold to attend the event, there would be fundraising, and sponsorship packages offered for local businesses and individuals to buy into to help host the event. There would also be fundraising

opportunities incorporated at the event with activities like live and silent auctions and raffles for the attendees to participate in. Pictures and videos of the event can be uploaded to NFRRS's social media platforms and its website as well.

Strategic Implications

This tactic will help NFRRS interact with each of its key publics and will help advance the organization towards its awareness, acceptance, and action objectives. The main objective of this tactic is to increase fundraising, but there are also several opportunities to encourage existing listeners to interact with the organization and increase the level of social media awareness and following from each of the publics. There are no disadvantages to this tactic, every ticket sold, and every donation made to the organization through this event will be helpful in supporting NFRRS's services.

Implementation Items

On average, I found that a small to medium sized fundraiser would cost a nonprofit organization a few thousand dollars, but the sale of the tickets would be used to cover the cost of the event itself. Gift donations and sponsorships would be used at the auctions during the event, which would not cost NFRRS any money. The volunteers and staff members could help with setting up and coordinating the event, which would also keep costs down. There would be a level of expertise needed in this area to ensure the preparation and promotion of the event is being taken care of, but I'm confident that Mike, the CEC, and any potential members from WNY Independent Living would be able to coordinate this effectively.

Owned Media Tactics

Electronic Media

- Audio Media (Radio Broadcast/Streaming)
- Microsoft PowerPoint

Digital Media

- Email
- Website
- Blog
- Online Fundraising

Publications

- Brochures (Already Created)

Strategic Implications

These tactics will be useful in connecting with NFRRS's key publics and will be used as an expansion of what the organization is already doing on its own. These tactics will help the organization increase its awareness online and broaden its reach, working to increase the awareness, acceptance, and action objectives set forth in this plan. The main advantages of these tactics are that they will get the organization's mission and vision across by providing helpful information digitally to each of the key publics.

Implementation Items

None of these items have a cost associated with them, as most of them are already set up by the organization and are free for the public to use. The creation of education materials in PowerPoint for example that can be used in educational gatherings will not take much time to create, maybe an hour or two. It will most likely contain the information that's already in the brochure but in a

presentation form. Writing short blogs (350-500 words) to add to the website, maybe adding one blog a week, should typically only take about an hour or two a week for the CEC or for an intern to create. If that became too time consuming, there are AI tools like ChatGPT which are free for the public to use and can be very helpful in not only generating blog topics but in writing them. They would most likely require some QC and editing to sound more like a voice from NFRRS, but that would cut the blog writing time in half. That seems doable and practical for the organization to accomplish and does not require a high skill level.

Blog topics could include tips or resources for visually impaired individuals (topics pertaining to parenting, or work, or college to target different age ranges), showcasing individual volunteers, discussing the impact of NFRRS's services, and addressing the importance of partnership when it comes to supporting NFRRS's services to help the visually impaired community.

Shared Media Tactics

Microblog

- X (formerly known as Twitter)

Online Social Network

- Facebook
- LinkedIn

Photo Sharing

- Instagram

Video Sharing

- YouTube (optional)

Strategic Implications

These tactics are especially helpful for this plan because they are all free platforms. NFRRS should do some research to determine which is the most popular for its key publics and what type of public each of the platforms attracts. These social platforms are also excellent for engaging with the key publics and creating a line of two-way communication. For example, fun polls and questions can be created on Instagram stories where followers will have a chance to weigh in and share their opinion with NFRRS which will not only increase engagement, but it will also encourage followers to interact with the posts and stories more often in the future knowing that their opinion is valued. This is also a great place to showcase the work NFRRS does in the community and can serve as a place to promote upcoming events as well. Posting actively, 3-5 times a week, on these social sharing platforms will increase the awareness, acceptance, and action objectives that we're looking to achieve from the existing visually impaired listeners, reaching a new younger generation of visually impaired listeners, as well as the potential donors. As mentioned previously, there are social sharing tools available to help schedule these posts in advance to go out on all social platforms to avoid having to go in every day or every other day to create a post. The messaging may change slightly between channels. For example, LinkedIn would be great for posting jobs or internship opportunities while Facebook and Instagram are less formal, so if NFRRS decides to use a social sharing tool, I would recommend using a similar message for Facebook, Instagram, and X, while using slightly different messaging for LinkedIn. A popular automated sharing tool is called [Greatly Social](#) which offers a free plan for up to nine social accounts at one account per platform.

Implementation Items

It will not cost NFRRS any money to implement this tactic, the only cost associated would be the time spent by whoever is running the social platforms and updating the website. Canva is a free design platform where images can be created that could be used on the posts. NFRRS's logo could also be added to the images that accompany the posts through Canva. If NFRRS wanted to use more stock type of photos, there are also free websites for that including [Unsplash](#) and [Pexels](#). For the type of content that should be implemented, I would suggest dedicating certain types of posts to certain days of the week to help with content planning. I've created an example of weekly content that can be shared to Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter), and LinkedIn below:

Monday Message:

- **Educational Post:** Provide information about NFRRS's services, how to access the broadcast, or apply for a radio, where the radio station is streamed, etc. Provide a link back to the website. This can be done in an easy-to-read infographic slideshow as well.
- **Share an Interactive Story:** Post a poll on the accounts' Story section that allows it to encourage follower engagement. Polls can include questions related to content or books that NFRRS is considering reading on the radio station to help listeners feel they have a voice in what is being covered.

Tuesday:

- **Volunteer Recognition:** Highlight volunteers individually, sharing how long they've been volunteering with NFRRS, the main topics they read regularly on the radio station, and a fun fact about them to help connect the volunteers and the listeners. Provide a link back to the website for followers to learn about becoming a volunteer.

- This day could be alternated between listener testimonials discussing how they like the service. Video testimonials could be posted to Instagram Reels as well.
- **Feedback Story:** Create an Instagram Story, select the Question option, label it Feedback and ask the listeners to share feedback about the volunteers. There is a word count limit in the Answer section for the user, so if people are getting cut off, NFRRS could post a Story asking for feedback to be directly messaged to that Instagram account.

Wednesday:

- **Action Post:** Encourage followers to donate and support NFRRS's services and provide a link back to this page:
https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=YMUNKQZ2ANB4S

Thursday:

- **Blog Post Day:** Upload a blog post to the website and share the link and image on the social platforms to drive traffic back to the blog.

Friday:

- **Promotional Post:** Use this day to promote any upcoming events or opportunities. This could include speaking engagements at colleges, internship opportunities, or fundraising events.

Another idea of content on the page could be in the form of a giveaway. For example, to encourage engagement from listeners, NFRRS could announce on the broadcast that they will be giving away certain items, possibly some sort of branded merchandise or maybe a donation item from an individual or company or a ticket to a game, to a listener who Likes/Follows NFRRS on

Facebook and shares the giveaway post to their Facebook story and tags NFRRS. This would help NFRRS build its following on social media and will be another way to connect with its audience.

To attract potential donors in online fundraising posts, NFRRS could encourage its followers to meet a certain donation goal. For example, NFRRS could breakdown the donation goal by radio cost, so posts could say something like, “Donating x amount of money, provides x amount of radios to the visually impaired community.” This could be gamified as well through prize giveaways for individuals who donated a certain amount or who were a top donor.

Earned Media Tactics

Direct News Subsidy

- News Fact Sheet
- News Release (Announcement)
- Audio News Release

Strategic Implications

These tactics are particularly useful for any events NFRRS wants to publicize, especially the proposed annual holiday fundraising event. It allows NFRRS to get the word out to not only its listeners, but also to potential donors whether they be companies or individuals who aren't already aware of NFRRS but might be interested in learning more about the event and how they can contribute to the cause. The audio release is also helpful in reaching more of the visually impaired community who may be tuning into other radio reports. This tactic will advance the organization's awareness, acceptance, and action objectives for all of its key publics and will be an effective way to expand its reach outside of social media platforms.

Implementation Items

These tactics will be of no cost to NFRRS and can be quickly created internally by either Mike or the CEC. I would recommend that Mike or the CEC be the spokesperson on behalf of these pieces as representatives of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service because they will be seen as credible, trustworthy sources that the public can identify with, particularly when coming from Mike because of his involvement and status in the organization. Major publications and radio stations to include in these releases include WGRZ, The Buffalo News, the local Bee Newspapers, WBEN, 103.3 The Edge, 92.9 Jack FM, 106.5 WRYK. These tactics will help the organization to reach its awareness, acceptance and action objectives with the main advantage being reaching a new audience and gaining exposure. There are no disadvantages to this tactic and it's free so the only time spent will be putting together the release information.

Paid Media Tactics

Most of this campaign has been centered around organic media tactics so the paid media tactics aren't a priority because I realize that the donations received are used primarily to run NFRRS's services. However, this could be beneficial in the promotion of any fundraising events or campaigns. For paid media tactics I would suggest the following:

- Email Marketing Campaigns
- Social Media Advertising (Facebook)
- Radio Advertising

Strategic Implications

Email marketing campaigns can be a great way to add personalized messaging to the promotion of NFRRS's event and target its existing listeners. Email marketing campaigns should link back

to the NFRRS website, specifically in the donation section. I believe email marketing campaigns can be targeted demographically as well, so if NFRRS has a list of its current listener emails and general information then the list provided could be segmented in a way to target a certain age group. Social media advertising through Facebook is more cost effective than LinkedIn which is why I left LinkedIn off of the suggested platforms. Social media advertising also allows for specific demographic targeting, which could be helpful when trying to reach potential donors. Radio advertising is another area that can help NFRRS promote the event and also promote the interest in sponsorships for the event. Each of these tactics will ultimately help NFRRS interact with each of its publics and help the organization advance towards its awareness, acceptance, and action objectives. The main advantage of paid media tactics is that extra push to get in front of targeted audiences. The only disadvantage of paid media tactics is the cost.

Implementation Items

The cost associated with paid media tactics varies. At the marketing agency I work at currently, the campaigns run at \$.05 per email so if NFRRS had 100 email addresses it would cost \$5 in a given month to send out an email campaign. This rate decreases by a cent if the emails reach 5,000-10,000 and by another cent from 10,001-25,000 and so on. This rate fluctuates slightly depending on which company or tool NFRRS chooses to run an email campaign on, but we can use the rate discussed as an average for the sake of this plan.

Regarding social advertising campaigns, again, it depends on how much of a budget you have per month, but I work with a lot of companies who typically set aside \$100-\$250 in Facebook ad spend each month. I've chosen Facebook because of its targeting precision and cost when compared to advertising on LinkedIn and Instagram. However, Instagram and Facebook also offer the ability to promote posts on social media, which can be helpful for posts specifically

created around something like an event and is a less expensive option compared to Facebook ads. Boosting posts essentially turns the organic posts into ads and will allow them to be seen by an audience outside of NFRRS's current following.

Step 8: Implementation – Scheduling & Budget

The following is a tentative strategy for the implementation of this plan along with the budget to be carried out by Mike, Executive Director of NFRRS, the Community Engagement Coordinator, and a potential intern/brand ambassador.

April-June 2024:

- Create internship job description and begin outreach to local colleges as a summer internship opportunity.
- Develop PowerPoint for educational gatherings and solidify brochures to pass out to audience members. Begin outreach to local schools to pose the idea of attending college fairs and connecting with student accessibility service offices to connect with visually impaired students.
- Begin research and put together a list of potential sponsors for an annual fundraising event in December.
- Create a call to action to use in broadcasts, encouraging current listeners to connect with NFRRS on social platforms.
- Create a survey that asks for feedback regarding services for current listeners to fill out. (This can be done for free using Google Forms)
- Create a 3-month content plan of blogging topics for July, August, and September (4 posts a month).

- Start writing July's blogs in June.
- Create one month of social content ideas for July and images to go along with the posts (utilize the free image websites and Canva to create the posts!).
 - Creating social calendars a month in advance is fine.
- If a Google Analytics tracking code is not already on the NFRRS site, add it in May.
- Ensure Facebook and Instagram accounts are set up as Business Accounts to collect and analyze the data in May.

July-September 2024:

- Begin publishing July's blogs and social content, posting 3-5 times a week on Instagram, Facebook, X, and LinkedIn and continue planning for the upcoming months.
- Share survey link on social media sites and on website to begin collecting feedback from listeners.
- Try boosting a post or two for a couple of days to see how it performs on Facebook or Instagram.
- Utilize brochures at local networking events.
- For holiday fundraising event: determine venue, entertainment, catering and ticket prices.

October-December 2024:

- Continue with content planning and posting on social platforms and website.
- Collect survey feedback and make adjustments if necessary to the broadcast.
- Promote the annual holiday fundraising event on social media and the website as well as through emailing with potential donors from list determined in previous three months.
- Collect gift items from potential donors to use as raffle items during the event.

- Create and send a news fact sheet, news release, and an audio news release pertaining to the event.

Budget

- Internship: Free
- Educational Events: Free
- Social Media Postings (Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn): Free
- Printed Materials: \$100 (This may not be necessary depending on what NFRRS already has on hand)
- News Releases: Free
- Fundraising Event (based roughly on 50 attendees): ~\$3,000
 - Venue: \$1,500
 - Catering: \$2,000
 - Paid Promotion of Event: ~\$500

Estimated Total: \$3,100

Phase 4: Evaluative Research

Step 9: Evaluation

To determine the impact and success of this public relations communication plan for the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service, each of the objectives (awareness, acceptance, and action) will be evaluated using the appropriate metrics. Some of the foundational data, as in the case of the social media standings, have been recorded in this plan and can be used to compare to the data collected at the completion of this plan. However, there are some areas of data that NFRRS might need to collect prior to the implementation of this plan as needed, outlined below.

Awareness Objectives

To raise awareness of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service and its mission to the visually impaired community ages 40-70 (20 percent increase in awareness by December 2024).

- This objective will be measured through pre- and post-campaign awareness surveys within the visually impaired community, which could be generated using Google Forms. NFRRS and WNY Independent Living will know who to contact and where to try to distribute these surveys to collect this data.

To raise awareness about NFRRS for visually impaired young adults, specifically to increase their understanding of its services (40 percent increase in awareness among young visually impaired adults ages 18-30 by December 2024).

- The pre- and post-campaign surveys can be used as well to evaluate this objective and could be distributed at college campuses, specifically among student accessibility service offices within the colleges, to determine the awareness of NFRRS among visually impaired students.

To raise awareness about NFRRS for potential donors, specifically to gain their interest in helping the visually impaired community through meaningful content (40 percent increase in awareness by potential donors by December 2024).

- This objective will be measured by tracking the visits to the Volunteer and Support pages of the website through the Google Analytics 4 code that will be (or already is) implemented on the website. Within Google Analytics 4 there is an Engagement section that includes Pages and Screens and within that area, NFRRS can search for the Volunteer and Support pages individually to pull that data. The data on this report includes access to

number of Views, number of Users, Average Engagement Time, and more. This can be assessed monthly to track changes as the campaign progresses.

Acceptance Objectives

To have an effect on the acceptance of current listeners connecting with NFRRS, specifically to gain interest of current listeners in connecting on social media platforms and sharing the content to their friends in the community (50 percent increase in website traffic and social media engagement by December 2024).

- This objective will be measured through audience feedback and media tracking. NFRRS can evaluate the website traffic metrics in terms of Users, New Users, and Page Views as well as tracking the insight data available on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn regarding shares and comments.

To have an effect on the acceptance of visually impaired young adults making informed decisions and knowing what's going on in the community, specifically to gain their interest in streaming NFRRS (20 percent increase in streaming of NFRRS across podcast platforms).

- This objective can be tracked through analyzing the data available on podcast platforms regarding streams and potential demographic trends. It can also be tracked through inquiries NFRRS receives regarding the streaming abilities from visually impaired young adults.

To have an effect on the acceptance of the visually impaired community, specifically to increase donations and sponsorships (20 percent increase in Support page views by December 2024).

- This objective can be measured through analyzing the Support page traffic within the Google Analytics account.

Action Objectives

To have an effect on the action of current listeners, specifically to increase social media following of users ages 40-70 by 20% December 2024.

- This objective will be measured through media tracking. Social media platforms, when set up as business accounts, offer insight into the audience's demographics. In addition to age, this includes gender-related information as well, which may be helpful for future campaigns. This information can be tracked weekly to determine how the posts are performing and if NFRRS is gaining new followers or post impressions from audience members aged 40-70. The limitation with that data is that it does not tell you if the new users are members of the visually impaired community. To accomplish this, a pre and post campaign awareness survey could be created using Google Forms and the link could be shared in each of NFRRS's social media platforms in a post letting its followers know it's trying to gain a better understanding of its audience on social media and include a question asking if the survey taker is visually impaired or not. Instagram does not allow links to be shared in posts itself, but the links can be shared in Stories, so for Instagram a post could be captioned informing followers that there is a survey in the Story. Once the data is collected, the survey can be redistributed at the end of the campaign and the new data can be compared to the original numbers to determine if there are increases in that age range.

To have an effect on the action of visually impaired young adults, specifically to increase following of users ages 18-30 by 20% December 2024.

- This objective can be evaluated by media tracking in a similar way to the previous objective, but in this case looking at the demographic data pertaining to the ages of 18-30.

To have an effect on the action of potential donors and sponsors, specifically to increase funding 20 percent by December 2024.

- This objective will be measured through donations earned throughout the campaign generated by the social posts linking back to the donation page and also through ticket sales and fundraising results from the potential holiday event in December.

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Appendix A: Interview Report #1

Mike Benzin, Executive Director of the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service

#1 What is the PR issue/situation facing NFRRS?

We've never had a plan. I have been in fundraising for 35 years and my predecessor did not have a lot of marketing training, so we need a good marketing plan. We are a small non-profit that needs to make sure we're reaching out to listeners, those who are blind or have a print disability, and are recruiting enough volunteers to read what our listeners are interested in reading.

#2 Where do you provide your service?

We started out servicing WNY and Southern Ontario and in the last year we've started servicing Rochester. NFRRS is broadcasted on a private radio frequency, but we have started streaming on five different podcast apps including Spotify. Listeners can tune in live from our website as well. They can ask Alexa to play our live feed.

#3 Who is your main audience?

Our main audience includes our volunteers, constituencies, donors, and listeners. Our listeners are between the ages of 40-70; not a lot of young people, and they are possibly on a lower income. They could be retired or on a fixed income. Internet access is often an issue for listeners.

#4 What publications does your service read?

[Mike said he would send me a program schedule, which he did, in addition to his answer.] USA Today, The Buffalo News, The Wall Street Journal, as many community papers as we can. We do take requests and put them in the queue if we can get ahold of them. Most listeners will call in requests through our listener hotline.

#5 Does NFRRS hold fundraising events?

We had to suspend events during COVID, but we've never really had an annual event. However, we have two events we'd like to hold this year. Back in the 90s, we did a cookbook which was a big seller, and we'd like to do a second book that could be converted to an app as well. For the second event, we'd like to do something with a literacy event with someone who was blind and do a read and meet the author type of event.

#6 What is NFRRS's mission?

I will send you both a mission and vision statement along with a plan of seven or eight goals that expires in December.

#7 Who are your main competitors?

We don't have local competitors in the area outside of other media outlets that people get news from, including WBEN or WBEO. We are unique in that sense. Our content being so niche is a huge differentiator. We do compete with other charities for funding.

#8 What is your budget?

We do as much for free as we can. We rely on social media, word of mouth, and referral partners.

#9 Who would be carrying out this communication plan?

I have a board with seven members and a small staff that includes a coordinator who recruits listeners, volunteers, and raises money, but it will primarily be carried out by me and our community engagement coordinator.

#10 Do you have any other notes you'd like to share with me?

I liked your initial plan of a content management calendar – what to post, how often to post, etc. Most of our current posts are reactive as opposed to proactive, so we'd like to have more of a proactive plan and do more to build an online audience. Our Facebook following is in the hundreds, and we'd like to get this into the thousands. Our brightest spots are our volunteers, who have been volunteering with us for 10, 20, and 30 years. They are very committed and passionate.

Appendix B: Interview Report #2

Linda Rinella, 15-year volunteer at the Niagara Frontier Radio Reading Service

#1 What inspired you to volunteer at NFRRS?

Simply put - I believe that everyone has the right to read or hear what is happening around them. When our daughter was little I did a lot of volunteering at her school, because I didn't really have a full time job, I had more of a part time job and one time, in church, our priest had mentioned about how one of his friends who was in a nursing home for priests couldn't see or read anymore and he had one of the reading radios, which we call readios, and he commented on how good of an organization that was. I had some free time and I figured, I'll check that one out too and that's how I got started at the radio. I don't know anyone who is blind or has bad eyesight or anything like that.

#2 How long have you been volunteering?

15 years

#3 What do you find most rewarding about volunteering with NFRRS?

That I know it's for a good cause. I know it's there for other people to use.

#4 What are your primary responsibilities as an NFRRS volunteer?

For the past ten years, I've been a live reader. I and my partner, read the Buffalo News on Wednesday mornings live, and then they play it back at 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock. During the pandemic, we were considered essential personnel. Every time I would leave the studio, Nick would hand me a bunch of materials to read so I could read at home, and they have something

called Dropbox where I could upload the recordings to the Dropbox. I did a lot of extra reading at that time.

#5 What kind of training and support do the volunteers receive through NFRRS?

Not a formalized training, my partner and I, Larry, the first couple of times we read together, we just sat down and the board operator at the time would show us how to format. When I first started volunteering at the radio station, they listened to how I sounded and then let me go right into recording chapters of books or magazines.

#6 What kind of impact has NFRRS had on the visually impaired community?

We don't get a lot of feedback from listeners, so we don't know how we sound to them in terms of what's good and what's bad, but I think they take it as it comes because we're all volunteers. However, feedback would be helpful, we would enjoy getting some more feedback.

#7 What sets NFRRS apart from other services provided to the visually impaired community?

[Linda was not sure how to answer this because she is not part of the visually impaired community and is unaware of the types of services offered to them, but she said that Mike would have answers to that. (She was correct! Mike did provide that information in his interview as well, so we moved onto the next question.)]

#8 Would you encourage the next generation to volunteer at NFRRS? If so, what would you say to them?

I absolutely would. This is something that is no brainer, you're just talking and reading out loud. You're doing something good for as many people who want to listen to the radio. I know it's

hard to come in during the day because a lot of young people are either in college or at work. But it's something to keep in mind later on when they do have time or when they can record at home and use the Dropbox to send in their recordings. There could be more people who'd like to try this. They're closed on Saturdays but that might be a good time to invite some people in to say, "this is what we do", without interrupting any recordings going on.

#9 What is your most memorable experience as an NFRRS volunteer?

Well, probably when Mike said that I was nominated for and awarded the Dr. John F. Keating Volunteer of the Year Award in 2021 presented by WNY Independent Living Inc. Family of Agencies because I did so much recording from home during COVID when the studio was closed other than for the live readers. I did a couple hundred recordings; it was a busy year.

#10 Do you have any suggestions for new NFRRS initiatives or service offerings?

With the Rochester radio reading service, they do some foreign language recordings. It would be nice to get people who speak other languages to do that here as well. Maybe one day a week, there could be international recordings that help people who speak other languages learn English as well and Immigration Services could let them know that this would be added to the broadcast at certain times so then people who speak another language would know when to tune in.

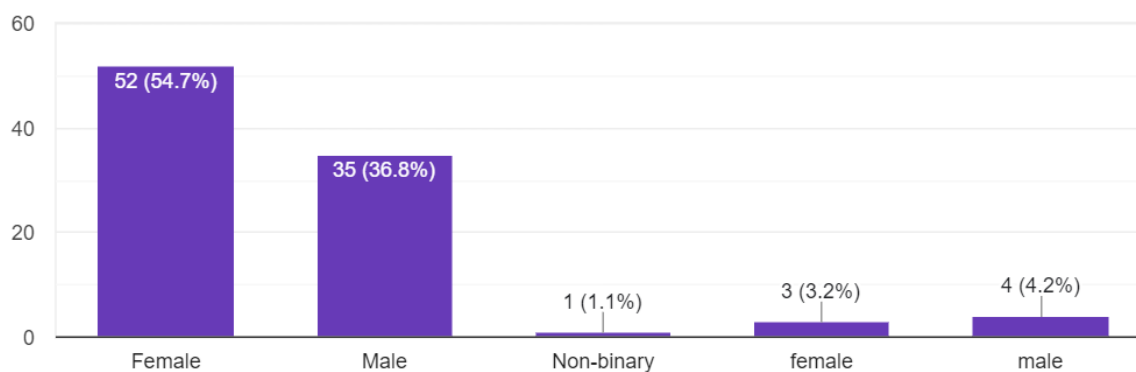
Appendix C: Survey Results

This survey was designed to understand participant engagement and behavior regarding fundraising for nonprofit organizations. There were 103 participants.

Gender

 Copy

95 responses

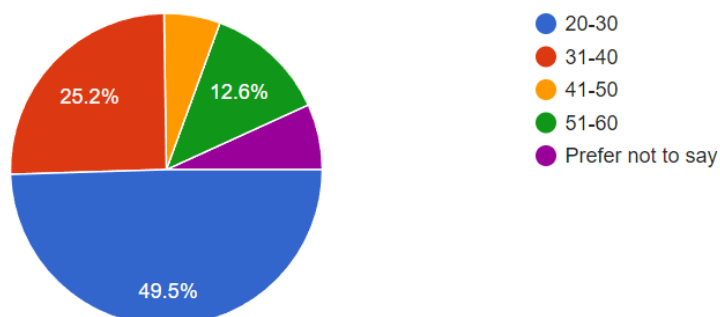


I made the gender field optional, and eight participants opted out. Of the 95 participants who included their gender, 57.9 percent identified as female, 41 percent identified as male, and 1.1 percent identified as non-binary.

Age

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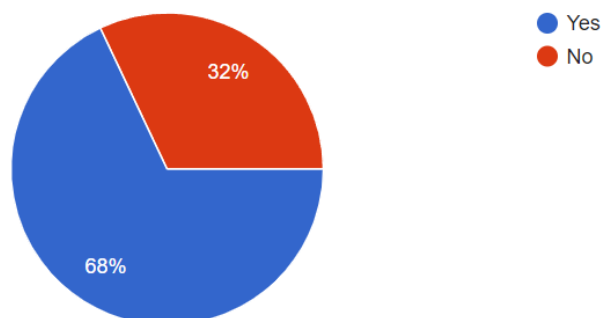
103 responses



I live in WNY

103 responses

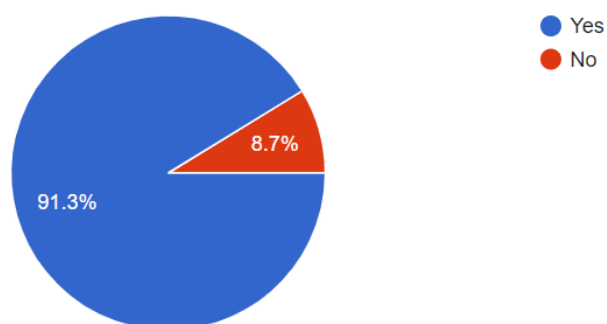
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I have made donations to nonprofit organizations in the past.

103 responses

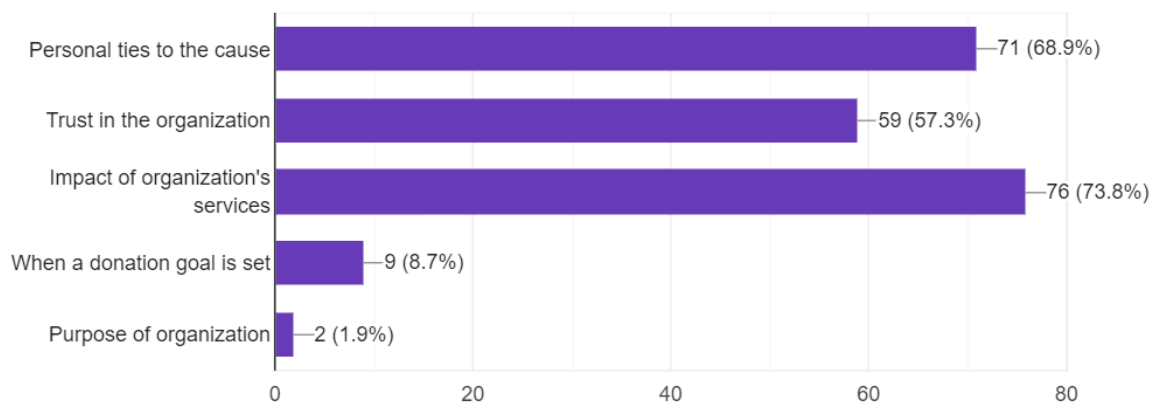
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What factors impact your decision to donate to nonprofit organizations?

103 responses

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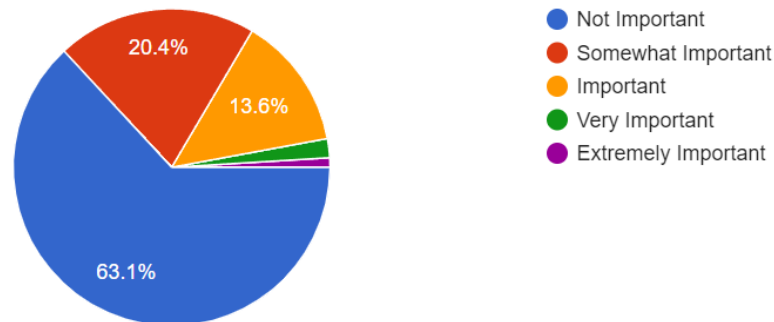


For this question, participants could select more than one option. I ended up excluding Purpose of organization because participants were asking the difference between that, and Impact of organization's services and I felt it may have been confusing.

How important are incentives in your decision to donate to nonprofit organizations?

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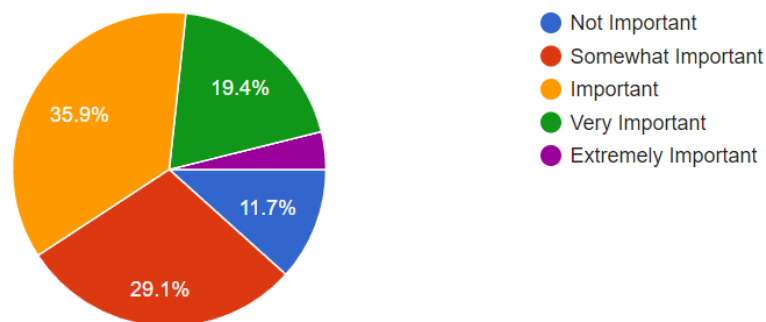
103 responses



How important is it that nonprofit organizations share the impact of your donations with you?

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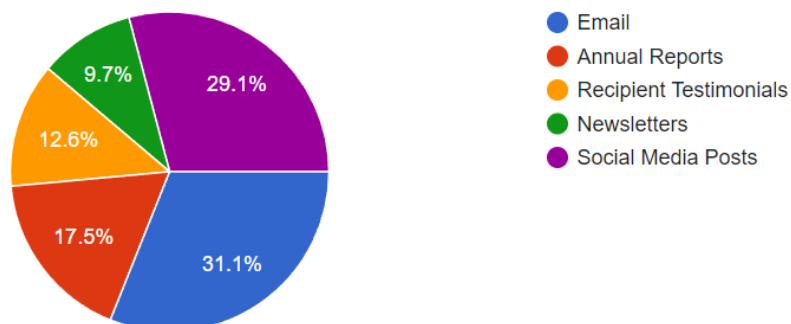
103 responses



How would you like to be updated about the impact of your donations to nonprofit organizations?



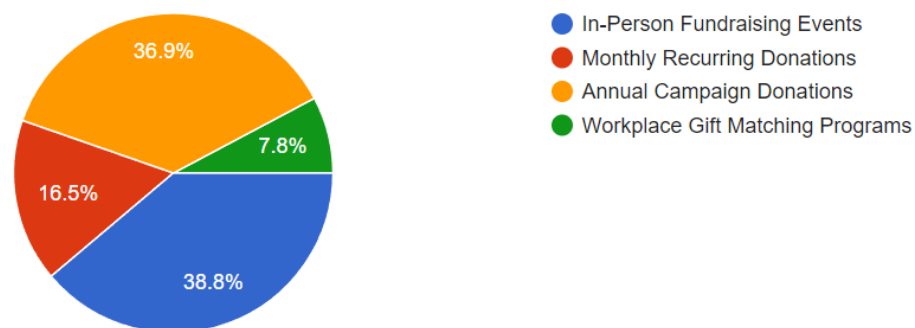
103 responses



How do you like to donate to nonprofit organizations?



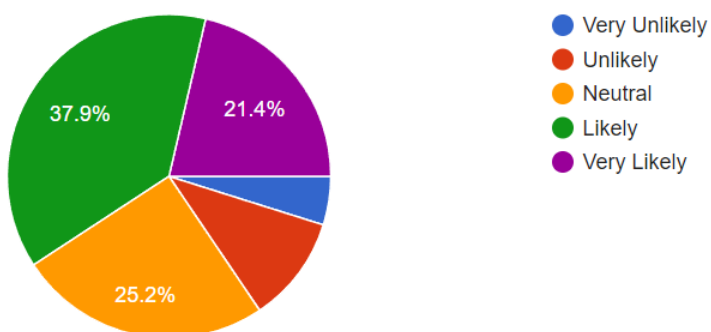
103 responses



How likely are you to follow a nonprofit organization you support on social media?



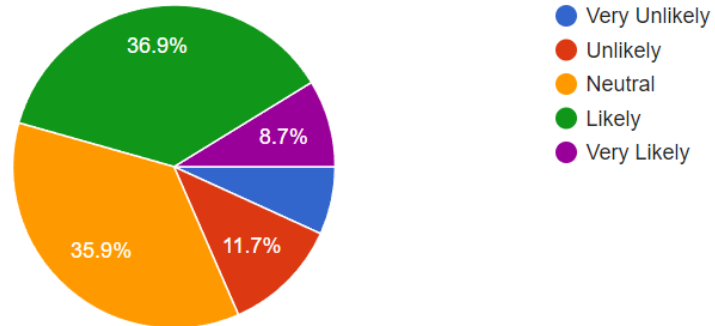
103 responses



How likely are you to share the social media accounts of a nonprofit organization you support with friends or family members?



103 responses



Appendix D: Focus Group

#1 Have you contributed to a nonprofit organization's online fundraising efforts through social media?

Common Responses: Yes

Noteworthy Individual Responses: N/a

#2 What encouraged you to donate to a nonprofit organization online?

Common Response: Having a personal connection and for the cause and knowing what the donations are going toward.

Noteworthy Individual Responses: N/a

I informed participants of NFRRS's services and how it works before asking the next question

#3 How can a nonprofit organization like NFRRS communicate its mission effectively through social media?

Common Response: Testimonials provided by listeners, explaining why the service has bettered their lives or testimonials from the perspective of someone working for the organization explaining how the service impacts their lives and how it feels to help people.

Noteworthy Individual Responses: The testimonial could be in the form of a video so people can see a real person talking about the service.

#4 What type of social media posts do you find interesting for nonprofit organizations?

Common Response: Anything that makes the post personal about the people or how the service impacts people; emotional posts.

Noteworthy Individual Response: N/a

#5 How can a nonprofit organization like NFRRS improve its social media presence and engagement?

Common Response: Staying on top of comments and messages is important and posting stories from time to time would be helpful because people can reshare them.

Noteworthy Individual Response: N/a

#6 How often should NFRRS post on social media?

Common Response: 2-3 times per week; enough to stay relevant. Being able to post somewhat regularly will help greatly.

Noteworthy Individual Response: N/a

#7 Which social media platforms would be best suited for a nonprofit organization like NFRRS?

Common Response: Facebook would probably be best and maybe Instagram as well. TikTok or Instagram Reels could be a good place to showcase video testimonials from listeners, volunteers, or board members.

Noteworthy Individual Response: Joining Facebook groups for nonprofit organizations is another great place to share content and posting upcoming fundraisers in the Events section of Facebook can be helpful as well.

#8 How can NFRRS interact with its audience online?

Common Response: Posting poll questions on social media stories or even asking questions in the stories can improve interactions or within a post caption NFRRS can include something like, “share your thoughts in the comments” and then NFRRS can respond to those comments as well.

Noteworthy Individual Response: A lot of nonprofits will do a design contest for a t-shirt giveaway and then create content that encourages followers to participate in the giveaway by like the page or tagging three people in the comments of a giveaway post and that can be a great way to gain new followers.

#9 In addition to social media what other avenues would be a good way to gain fundraising support for NFRRS?

Common Response: Email or a newsletter. PPC ads with video testimonials that link back to the donation page might be a good way to get people to convert.

Noteworthy Individual Response: For fundraising, posting a goal number with a tracker on the Home page of the website and a brief description about how the donation goal will help x amount of people and what the money will go towards. This can be done on Facebook as well and people can share the post to their own social media pages and people can donate through any of those posts.

#10 Are there any other comments or suggestions you’d like to offer?

Common Response: An audio book might be a good idea to use as a giveaway item.

Noteworthy Individual Response: Partnering with a local restaurant for a giveaway or to host an event might also be helpful for exposure.